AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please add new claims 11-13. A copy of all pending claims and a status of the claims is provided below.

Claim 1 (previously presented): A method of inter process communication (IPC) between processors in a network processing environment, comprising the steps of:

a) providing software enabled functions that open and close inter process communication paths for transmitting and receiving of inter process communication frames;

b) providing software enabled functions that allow said inter process communication frames to be stacklessly transmitted to one or several processors in said network processing environment; and

c) upon calling an open software transmit/receive IPC path function, selecting by software either data or control path in said network processing environment to transmit or receive said inter process communication frames,

wherein the inter process communication frames include guided frames.

Claim 2 (Original): The method of inter process communication (IPC) between processors in a network processing environment recited in claim 1, wherein the software enabled functions that open and close inter process communication paths for transmitting and receiving of inter process communication frames perform the steps of:

determining if an IPC path function is a send or receive function; and

if a receive function, calling a receive IPC function.

Claim 3 (Original): The method of inter process communication (IPC) between processors in a network processing environment recited in claim 2, wherein the software enabled functions that allow said inter process communication frames to be transmitted to one or several processors in said network processing environment comprise the steps of:

determining if an IPC frame to be sent is to be unicast or multicast; if multicast, calling a multicast transmit function; but if unicast, calling a unicast transmit function.

Claim 4 (Original): The method of inter process communication (IPC) between processors in a network processing environment recited in claim 3, wherein after calling one of said receive IPC, multicast transmit or unicast transmit functions, further performing the step of closing a software transmit/receive IPC path function.

Claim 5 (previously presented): An inter process communication (IPC) system providing communication between processors in a network processing environment, comprising:

a) software enabled functions that open and close inter process communication paths for transmitting and receiving of inter process communication frames;

b) software enabled functions that allow said inter process communication frames to be stacklessly transmitted to one or several processors in said network processing environment; and

c) means for selecting by software either data or control path in said network processing environment to transmit or receive said inter process communication frames in response to calling an open software transmit/receive IPC path function,

wherein the inter process communication frames include guided frames.

Claim 6 (Original): The inter process communication (IPC) system providing communication between processors in a network processing environment recited in claim 5, wherein the software enabled functions that open and close inter process communication paths for transmitting and receiving of inter process communication frames comprise:

means for determining if an IPC path function is a send or receive function; and

if a receive function, means for calling a receive IPC function.

Claim 7 (Original): The inter process communication (IPC) system providing communication between processors in a network processing environment recited in claim 6, wherein the software enabled functions that allow said inter process communication frames to be transmitted to one or several processors in said network processing environment comprise:

means for determining if an IPC frame to be sent is to be unicast or multicast;

if multicast, means for calling a multicast transmit function; but

if unicast, means for calling a unicast transmit function.

Claim 8 (Original): The inter process communication (IPC) system providing communication between processors in a network processing environment recited in claim 7, further comprising means closing a software transmit/receive IPC path function after one of said receive IPC, multicast transmit or unicast transmit functions have been called.

Claim 9: (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said interprocess communication frames include headers to exchange frame formats.

Claim 10: (Previously presented) The method of claim 5, wherein said interprocess communication frames include headers to exchange frame formats.

Claim 11: (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the transmitting and receiving of said inter process communication frames occur simultaneously.

Claim 12: (New) The method of claim 5, wherein the transmitting and receiving of said inter process communication frames occur simultaneously.

Claim 13 (New): A method of inter process communication (IPC) between processors in a network processing environment, comprising the steps of:

a) providing software enabled functions that open and close inter process communication paths for transmitting and receiving of inter process communication frames;

b) providing software enabled functions that allow said inter process communication frames to be stacklessly transmitted to one or several processors in said network processing environment; and

c) upon calling an open software transmit/receive IPC path function, selecting by software either data or control path in said network processing environment to transmit or receive said inter process communication frames,

wherein the transmitting and receiving of said inter process communication frames occurs synchronously.